Fw: Response to CGS statement

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Thu 6/20/2024 1:39 PM
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The Ohio State University, [redacted]

From: Office of Student Life <studentlife@osu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 5:41 PM
To: [redacted]@OSU.EDU <[redacted]@OSU.EDU>
Subject: Response to CGS statement

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Student Life

May 22, 2024

The statement from the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) you received a short time ago contains a number of misleading and inaccurate statements. Given that the CGS message was sent via a university-facilitated system, consistent with their benefits of being a student government organization, we are obligated to provide this awareness as it is important for you to understand the facts surrounding the recent protests on campus.

Ohio State has worked diligently to support our community throughout these extremely challenging times. Our priority is always the health, safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. In particular, during finals week, we communicated broadly through a number of channels that we would continue to consistently enforce our space rules to support the success of all students.

Well established university rules prohibit camping and overnight events. The university reached out to student organizers well in advance of the planned encampment to remind

them of Ohio State's space rules and to inform them that encampments are not and would not be permitted. On Thursday, April 25, demonstrators exercised their First Amendment rights for several hours and were then instructed to disperse. Individuals who refused to leave after multiple warnings over a five-hour period were arrested and charged with criminal trespass for knowingly violating university policy and police orders.

Arrests are not an action that we take lightly, and we appreciate the support of all of our law enforcement partners to disperse the encampment for the safety of our university community.

No specific groups or individuals were targeted other than those who refused to comply with the lawful order to disperse.

Ohio State is steadfastly committed to protecting the First Amendment right to free speech and expression on our campuses. The university has made this commitment clear, publicly, and is transparent with our community about how to exercise these rights. What occurred on April 25 was not about limiting free speech. The encampments on the South Oval were an intentional violation of university space rules that exist so that teaching, learning, research, service and patient care can occur on our campuses without interruption.

Decisions about demonstrations are never made based on the content of the speech or political views of those participating. Rather, Ohio State consistently and uniformly enforces its well-established space rules. These rules prohibit disrupting the university's mission, administrative functions and other campus-life activities.

Since October 7, 2023, the university has supported more than 30 demonstrations, vigils, and public events hosted by a variety of student organizations. OSUPD and trained student support staff are on-site for all student demonstrations. Since October, Ohio State has repeatedly communicated that the law and university policy will be enforced consistently.

It is also important to point out that, pursuant to Ohio state law, state entities cannot divest interests in Israel. Ohio Revised Code Section 9.76 prohibits the university from divesting any interests in Israel and prohibits adopting or adhering to a policy that requires divestment

from Israel or with persons or entities associated with it.

Ohio State utilizes a diversified investment strategy to grow the resources available to support our academic mission, such as student scholarships, faculty positions and educational resources. The university generally invests in funds, not individual companies. Specific investments are trade secret and therefore not public. The university follows all applicable laws regarding investments.

Thank you for allowing us to clarify the inaccuracies contained in the CGS statement.

Ohio State has always, and always will, take the action that is in the best interest of our community.

Office of Student Life

The Ohio State University

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